



## Washington State Senate

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

April 11, 2013

Dear Secretary LaHood:

First and foremost, please know how much our caucus valued your trip to Olympia to show your support for the Columbia River Crossing (CRC). The CRC is a project that is critically important to our state, to the West's north-south transportation corridor and to our nation's larger economic vitality. Replacing the bridge will not only keep drivers safe, but will also spur economic activity from Canada to Mexico, which is exactly what our region needs as we continue to rebound from the Great Recession.

We whole-heartedly agree with the observations you shared specific to the movement of freight and the future prosperity of our region and our country, as well as the need to provide a safe and reliable crossing for everyday travelers. As Gov. Inslee noted, the existing bridge sits on rotting piers that were put in the Columbia River in 1917 and would not survive a major earthquake. Every new delay on the project jeopardizes the safety of the people who travel the bridge each day. The events of recent days show that the vast majority of legislators share this view.

Second, we regret the undignified reception you received when you met with the Republican majority coalition in the state Senate. The views of a single vocal member by no means represent the will of our larger legislative body. Most of our members realize this project will translate into jobs for both the short-term and the long-term. The majority of our members also realize this bridge isn't just for those who live on either side of the river but for people and businesses all over the West Coast and beyond.

We hope Wednesday's political grandstanding will not alter your desire to move forward with a transportation system worthy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The CRC project has received 12,000 comments at over 1,000 public meetings over 16 years. We trust that you will not be discouraged from the commitment your administration has made to help us move forward with a project intended to keep the public safe and is in the best interests of our local communities, our state, our region and our nation.

We will continue working toward a good end and, with your help and our perseverance we will get there.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracey Eide".

Senator Tracey J. Eide  
Co-chair, Senate Transportation Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Annette Cleveland".

Senator Annette Cleveland  
49<sup>th</sup> Legislative District